

Information Technology Center

Statement of Purpose

To provide the technology to enhance the delivery of county government services and increase the access to and quality of vital government data which facilitates commerce and enhances quality of life in our community. This will be accomplished in a spirit of customer service, partnership, and consultation with our stakeholders. Our guiding principles are quality, integration and cost effectiveness.

1. Enhance workforce efficiency by providing a common toolset across the enterprise for all Catawba County employees.
 - a. Deploy Microsoft Office 2007 on all computers where compatibility is not an issue in order to ensure county employees maintain the ability to communicate with outside agencies. The current version of Office uses a different file format from the older versions we currently use. Hardware compatibility, software configurations will be checked and classes designed for county employees.

Office 2007 was deployed to all employees and all county employees trained. This was completed on time and under budget.

- b. Deploy a common phone system across the county with a standard feature set that is available to all departments as well as provide training and support for the new telephone system. A Cisco VoIP system will be installed by November 2007.

The Voice Over IP phone system installation was completed Aug 2007 and under budget.

- c. Provide computer equipment to county employees that is reliable and has enough resources to run current software standards by replacing 20 percent of desktop and notebook computers, excluding DHR agencies. To be completed June 30, 2008.

Computers and printers were purchased and installed to maintain the 20% replacement cycle. Replacement of 20% of the equipment over the past year was completed within budget.

2. Ensure that Catawba County Government has secure, reliable and redundant infrastructure to meets the needs of the citizens and the workforce.
 - a. Deploy a SAN and Virtual Server solution to ensure the protection and recovery of Catawba County information systems. This project will prioritize systems, inventory applications, document processes, list assets, identify problems, and provide an

organized recovery process to bring critical services back online quickly. Completed by Dec 2008.

A SAN and Virtual Server solution has been deployed. This environment provides for redundancy in the system for disaster recovery. Currently 88 of the County servers have been virtualized. The project is ahead of schedule and under budget.

- b. Replace core switches to provide increased speed and quality of service. September 2007.

All switches were replaced before Aug of 2007 and are working well with the new phone system.

- c. Provide wireless Internet and Intranet access in county offices for the public and employees. This will allow for users to be mobile within the county and more efficient by having applications and information available where they need it instead of just at their desks. It will provide additional services for the public at the libraries as they now have a limited number of public access computers. ITC will install wireless capabilities in specified areas such as the Government Center, Newton Public Library, EOC, and the Register of Deeds office. Completed by June 2008.

Wireless access is available in the Government Center, Newton Public Library, EOC, and the Register of Deeds office. Wireless is also complete in all major County buildings. All the branch libraries are complete except Maiden and Claremont.

- 3. Enhance department services and efficiency by providing and supporting applications specific to the needs of the department while maintaining an enterprise perspective.
 - a. Work with departments to analyze business processes and where feasible, work to improve these processes through the use of technology.
 - **Online, interactive training for Workplace Harassment and various Risk Management courses is now offered to staff. This has greatly improved efficiency by eliminating the amount of time it previously took to schedule meeting times and places. It also allows employees to complete required training at more convenient times that are less disruptive to the work environment. The concept has been so well received that it will be expanded to other areas.**
 - **A Unified Payment System is in the process of being implemented. This will allow credit/debit and online payments for services, taxes and permits in all departments that accept payments. A vendor has been selected and is working on the project. Credit/debit card payments can be made via telephone or the Internet with the new vendor for tax payments. The permit center and finance**

departments will be able to offer this service by mid August. The project is being implemented in a phased approach for other departments with completion by December 2008.

- The imaging/document management system is being expanded to include Finance, Zoning, Tax and possibly Social Services departments. Currently the purchasing department has contract information stored in the system and other areas of Finance will begin by Fall 2008.
- Assisted with the technology aspects of redesigning the EOC to work more efficiently with the many tools available to assist in emergencies.
- Developed program to assist school nurses with tracking services for outcome reporting. This application is projected to save hundreds of hours in compiling and reporting outcomes to various agencies for funding requirements. Training completed and fully implemented June 2008.
- Provided project management and technical assistance for implementation of mobile application for environmental health inspectors.

b. Maximize the investment in Peoplesoft where feasible.

- **Mental Health Partners contracted with Catawba County for Financial and Human Resource software and support. Work began in April and has been dedicated to providing the software, testing and training for production by July 1, 2008 since that time. Web site development and maintenance was also provided. This diverted resources from other projects and delayed them by approximately 3 months.**
- **A web based Maintenance Work Order system was put in production July 1, 2008. This will greatly improve tracking, reporting and managing work order requests for all departments. Maintenance technicians, departments requesting services and management will be able to track the progress of each work order via the Intranet. Maintenance technicians were equipped with mobile devices to further maximize efficiency.**
- **eLearning was implemented to offer online self-registration for classes as well as maintaining a history per class and per employee. This module was very well received during the Office 2007 training for DSS employees and by Risk Management and Personnel for the training they offer and track.**
- **The online recruiting system (TAMS) was enhanced with several features to make the interview selection process more efficient:**
 - routing applications to an interview team rather than one by one
 - allowing each applicant to be flagged yes, no or maybe for interviews
 - allowing views per job opening with sort options
- **Added features to allow promoting and tracking of “green” purchases for all departments**
- **The implementation of Portal allows PeopleSoft users to use a single sign-on to access all PeopleSoft applications. It also allows personalization of screens for**

each user. The technical aspects are complete. Training and expansion are next steps.

- c. Develop or purchase, install, train and support databases and applications including email, word processing, financial, database, presentation and specialized applications.

Training for all employees for moving from Office 2000 to Office 2007 products was completed and courses for more advanced knowledge and usage of these products will continue to be offered.

- 4. Provide timely, accurate information and services to citizens, employees and stakeholders in a variety of methods via the County's Internet and Intranet services.

- a. Maintain a strategic direction of moving appropriate information to the County's website.

- **Both the main page and departmental web pages are updated regularly to provide current, accurate information.**
- **Recently, Kids Voting Catawba was added to assist teachers, students and citizens with current election information**
- **A department summary page was added to assist citizens with knowing the contact information and functions of each department from a consolidated location.**

- b. Explore and implement services that allow citizens to conduct business anytime and anyplace with the County via the Internet.

- **The service of offering online payments from the County website is currently in progress. The tax department is using the updated system and the Permit Center and Finance departments are in progress with an August 15th target date.**
- **The Animal Control adoption web site has been updated to allow Catawba County specific information to be more readily available.**
- **The 4-H Youth Council was provided with web-based tools to facilitate discussions, meetings and documentation.**
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- c. Continually review and add new features to the County's website.

- **Animal Services web site now offers and encourages volunteer, donation and safety related information and provides a method for the public to post and review "Lost and Found" pet information online.**
- **Tag clouds were added to web pages to facilitate navigation.**

- **BLOG engine software has been installed, tested and is being used to regularly update commissioners with 2007-2008 General Assembly Session information.**
- **Hmong translation information has been added to the home page.**
- **The ability to change the text size on pages has been added.**

d. Expand RSS and subscription services offered on the website.

Other newsletters will be added from the Library and Social Services within the next few weeks.

5. Provide better services to our citizens with critical care and other special needs in times of emergency.

a. Develop a consolidated data repository for storing information and disseminating it to emergency management agencies.

This has been completed for Emergency Services and Social Services. We are currently working with Public Health to incorporate their information into the system.

b. Allow citizens with critical care or special needs to register with County agencies to assure proper care is received in emergency situations.

Citizens can currently register via the internet, by phone or by completing a paper form and submitting it to an agency.

c. Develop a data flow process between the critical care/special needs database and the Citizens Alert Notification System, GIS and Emergency Services.

This is complete and was tested during the McGuire drill. It allowed the EOC to display maps which indicated the addresses of registered critical care/special needs citizens.

GIS DEPARTMENT

1. Insure that the County's GIS provides reliable, valid, and useful information to our citizens. This will be accomplished by: Upgrading and maintaining GIS related hardware, software, and data; adding additional layers of geographic data as requested to the GIS database; and supporting County departments with GIS data, analysis, and maps.

GIS continues to support several departments with maps and data. The primary departments requiring support during FY 07-08 were Emergency Services, Planning and Community Development, Utilities and Engineering, and the Tax Office. In late summer, the County implemented a Community Alert System which involved efforts from Technology, Emergency Services, and GIS. This application proved successful and received praise during the McGuire Nuclear Drill in October. Joint efforts were also successful in implementing the E-Team Application used in the EOC. Early in 2008, several of the GIS Staff worked on the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program with Planning and Community Development. This spring GIS worked closely with Emergency Services in their efforts to provide more efficient fire and rescue services to the Sherrill's Ford Community.

Enhancements of the GIS website continue. Enhancements this year include a Parcel Analysis Tool which allows the user to compile reports and maps based on their requested criteria; a measure tool; and a digital street atlas.

2. Provide a quality product and quick response time to our customers by responding to and completing 95% of all map and data requests from the public within 24 hours of receiving the request.

95% of all mapping and data requests from the public are responded to within 24 hours of receiving the request.

3. Continue to strengthen relationships with the municipalities through the GIS Consortium. This lends to cost sharing and savings on joint projects; and ensures continuity of data for all the citizens of Catawba County, whether they are city or county residents.

GIS continues to work closely with and provide technical assistance to the member cities of the GIS Consortium. Bi-Monthly GIS Steering Committee meetings are conducted to provide a means of connection and communication for all the participating members. We joined with the municipalities, the local school systems, and the hospitals on the Community Alert System.

4. Continue to improve the speed and efficiency for the GIS users by proceeding with the transfer of data and applications to ArcSDE. This technology will allow us to better serve the GIS customers.

The bulk of the GIS database has been transitioned to ArcSDE and is in use by staff in map production and is being utilized in the several applications accessed by various departments and the public.

E-911 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

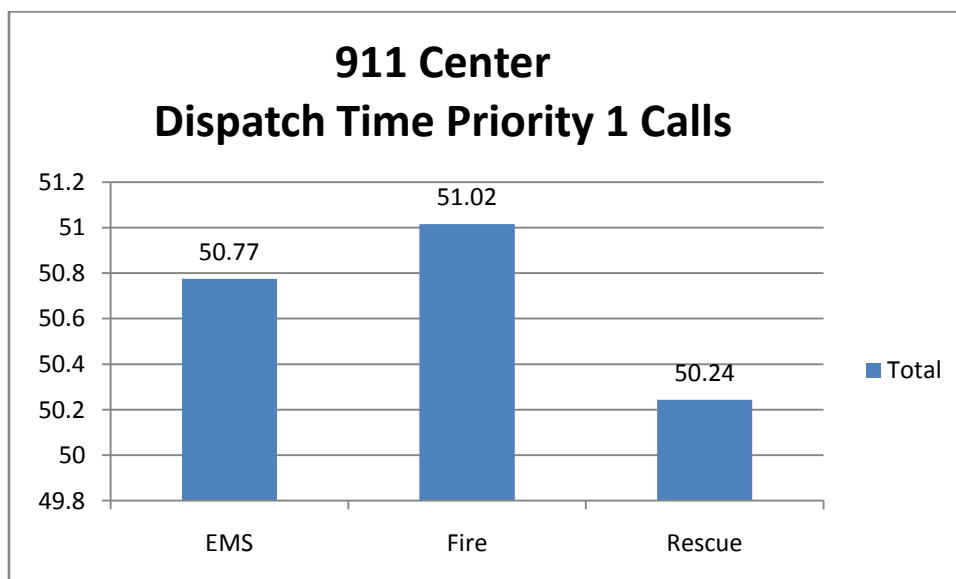
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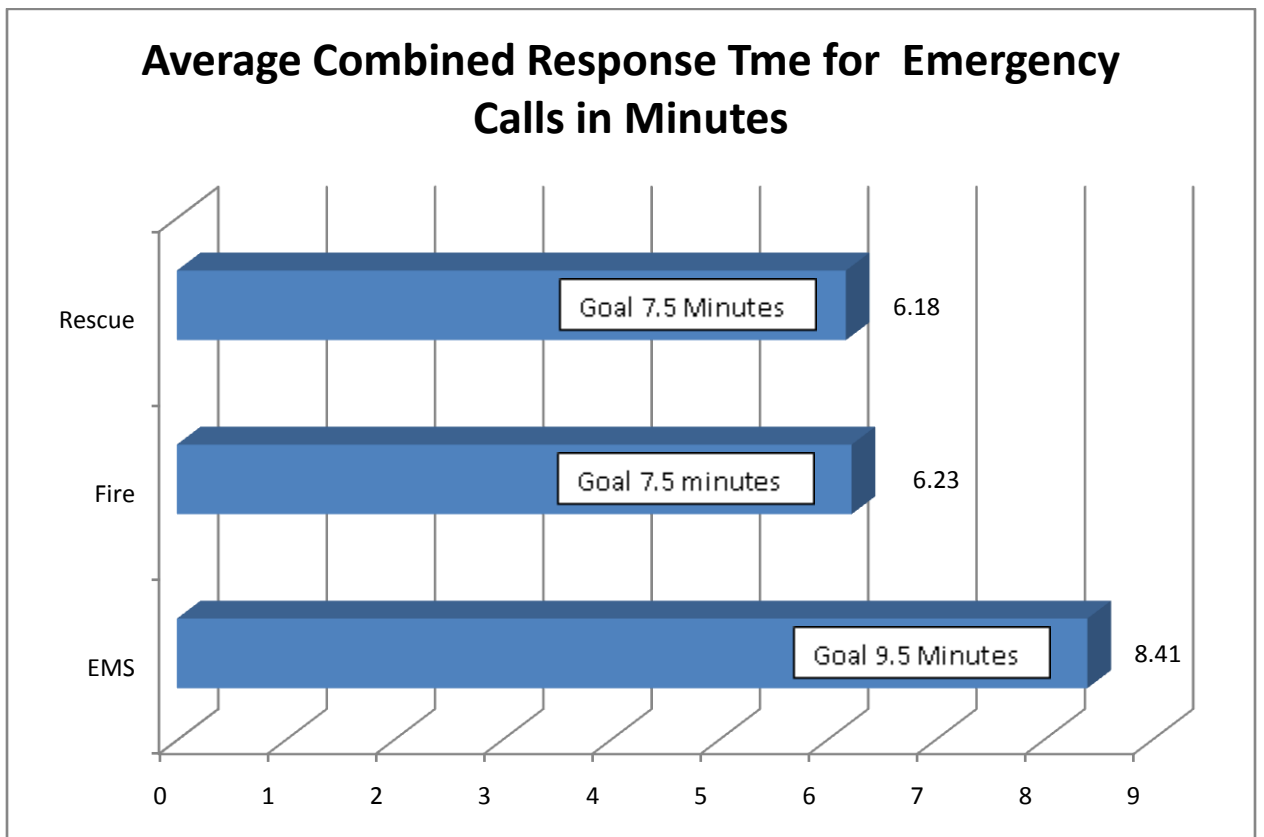
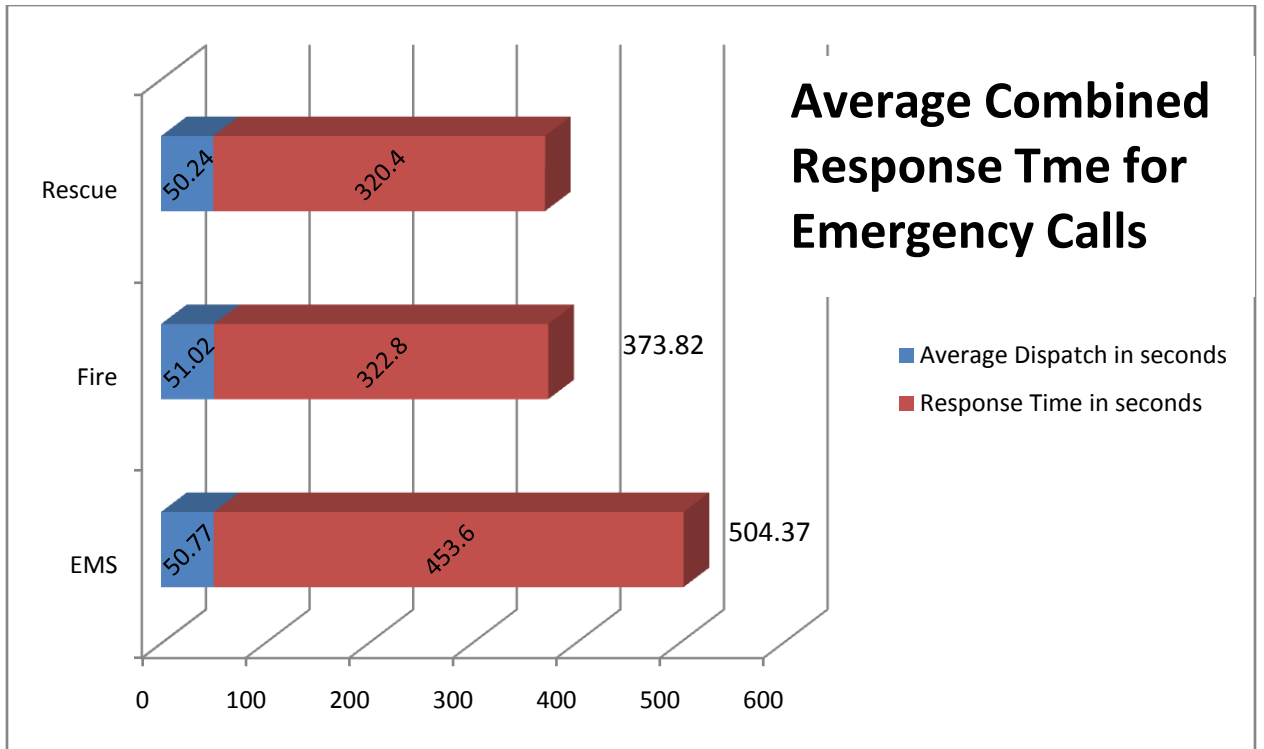
The Catawba County E-911 Communications Center provides emergency and administrative communications for the citizens of Catawba County by placing them in touch with public safety and related government service agencies. To be prepared for daily communications traffic and emergencies requiring adequate numbers of trained personnel. To have the most current state-of-the-arts computerization, along with radio and telephone technology to assure that saving lives and property can always be attained.

Outcomes

1. To ensure citizens receive prompt emergency and medical care, the Communications Center will maintain a 90 second dispatch time average on all emergency calls throughout the County. Responding units will have the following response time averages:
 - a. EMS – 8 minute average response time, which is a 9½ minute average total response time.
 - b. Rescue – 6 minute average response time, which is a 7½ minute average total response.
 - c. Fire – strive to meet a 6 minute average response time, which is a 7 ½ minute average total response.

Dispatch time for EMS emergency calls for the year was 50.77 seconds, Fire emergency calls for the year was 51.02 seconds, and Rescue emergency calls for the year was 50.24 seconds.





2. The Communications Center will provide quality customer service to all public safety agencies by responding to field units within 15 seconds of each unit's call. Accomplishment evidenced by maintaining an overall satisfaction rating of 90% or better from all public safety agencies.

72.6 % of users surveyed agreed that the 911 Center responded to field units within 15 seconds.

3. Improve citizen and community awareness of the 911 process.
 - a. Educate local businesses on the information needed by the E-911 Telecommunicator to dispatch the appropriate public safety agencies to the correct locations when 911 is called by conducting on-site training and informational sessions with work groups. Post-event customer service surveys will be given to participants to determine if attendants found the training useful and retained the desired information.

The 911 Center continues to keep this as an on-going process. The 911 Center has been invited to assist businesses, as well as church groups and other organizations on the education process of 911. This has been well received, and offered the opportunity to educate individual citizens. Example, when a child dials 911 and the parents get the call back that the child did, in fact, play on the phone, the parents wanted to bring the child by to apologize (twice in the past six months). We have welcomed them in and spoken with both the parents and the child, and usually end up giving them a 911 sucker or 911 tattoo. This has been extremely helpful in the need to educate our citizens.

The 911 Center continues to offer assistance when asked by a business if there are problems with when they call 911 and how they can improve. Several area businesses have been assisted with their building codes regarding "Area of Rescue Assistance" (designated areas within a business where employees are instructed to go when they need assistance with evacuation) in helping them to understand what information a Telecommunicator needs from them when they call 911.

- b. Develop 911 information for dissemination to the public.

The 911 Center has multi-lingual pamphlets available for public access at the Government Center and the Sheriff's Office Records Division. We also provide information on the Government Channel through Charter Communications as often as it can be displayed.

- c. Work with the three school systems to develop awareness of the 911 process in our youth.

The 911 Center continues to work with the Newton-Conover and Catawba County School systems in educating the children. That has been expanded to include the Catawba County YMCA daycare during the summer months. The Center is also working through Catawba County libraries with “911 Story Time” for the children and Newton Fest.

- d. Translate 911 information materials into Spanish and Hmong.

The 911 Center has pamphlets available in English, Spanish, and Hmong languages. These have been distributed in those communities to help educate those citizens and let them know the 911 Center is here for their use and to not be afraid to call when needed. The Center worked through the Hickory Fire Department (with one of their trainers, Mabelisse Hernandez) to assist in reaching those communities.

- 4. Continue working with the State Highway Patrol, the Piedmont Area Communications Council, and local public safety agencies in general to establish radio interoperability between agencies in Catawba County and the surrounding area.

- a. Work with the State Highway Patrol to replace and rebuild radio towers in Catawba County as funded under Homeland Security grants.

The 911 Center is currently waiting on the Attorney General’s office to finish the paperwork for the land on River Bend Road. The land at this site is to be turned over to the State Patrol, and plans are continuing to move forward with the build-out of that tower site. Approval has been given for the project and work is moving forward to build the tower at River Bend Rd.

- b. Work with the Piedmont Area Communications Council to implement its eleven county interoperability grant.

Connectivity has been completed and tested here at Catawba County. The 911 Center is connected to the 11 counties’ systems.

- c. Cultivate joint ventures between local public safety agencies to generate savings through pooled resources including pursuing sharing microwave communications at State Highway Patrol sites.

The 911 Center is still waiting on the grant funding to migrate to the Viper System. The microwave link from Baker’s Mountain to Newton has been completed which

eliminate one T1 line and its expense. We continue to look at less expensive ways to connect sites.